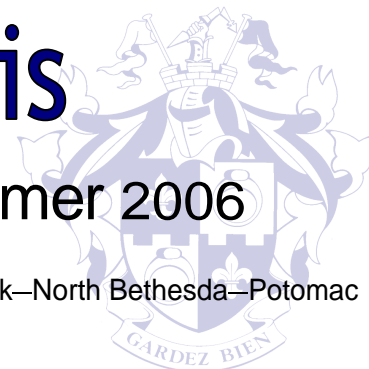




# Howard A. Denis

news for district one - summer 2006

Bethesda—Chevy Chase—Friendship Heights—Garrett Park—North Bethesda—Potomac



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Dear Friends and Neighbors,

I thank you for allowing me the great honor of representing you on the Montgomery County Council. I continue to work relentlessly to serve District 1 in the best way I can.

Educating our children remains my top priority. The County Council and its Education Committee, of which I am a member, continues to show its commitment to critical educational needs. I'm pleased to say that we fully funded the accelerated roll-out of all-day kindergarten and put \$2.3 million towards further elementary school class size reductions. I fully supported facilities improvements to schools in District 1 and brokered a solution for the elementary school capacity issues in the Churchill Cluster.

In addition to supporting quality education, we supported funding for improving our road network and public transit. In public safety, the Council approved an additional 56 new police officer and non-sworn positions. In funding these critical services, the Council passed a budget that was balanced and met the Charter limit for property tax revenue through a mix of across-the-board tax rate cuts, a property tax credit for every homeowner, and cuts for senior citizens.

Among my legislative accomplishments are bills intended to mitigate the effects of tear-down development. I have also sponsored measures to eliminate an unconstitutional limit on free speech and to create a tax incentive for telecommuting.

I encourage you to call or email me if you have any questions or comments about matters covered in this newsletter or before the Council, or if we can assist you in any way.

## Council Lowers Property Tax

### Rate Reduced

The Council lowered the property tax rate by five cents per \$100 assessed valuation (compared to last year's four-cent cut), which will save the owner of a home assessed at \$440,000 about \$220 in property taxes.

### Tax Credit Increased

Every County homeowner will also receive a credit of \$221 on their property tax bill (compared with \$116 last year). All told, the average County homeowner with a home assessed at \$440,000 will see at least a \$441 reduction from what he or she would otherwise pay in property taxes – more if they qualify for the "circuit-breaker" credit.

### Circuit Breaker Expanded

Under the expanded circuit-breaker tax credit, homeowners with incomes lower than \$64,000 can receive additional targeted tax relief based on the first \$300,000 of their home's assessed value – tax relief that would average \$804 per household for those eligible.



## Council Unanimous on Funding Churchill Cluster School Needs

The Council approved a solution to the Seven Locks Elementary School replacement question that addresses the problem of overcrowding in the Churchill Cluster. Under a resolution I put forward, Seven Locks Elementary School will receive a 4 to 8 room addition and a gymnasium as part of a modernization scheduled for 2010-11. Seven Locks will remain a stand-alone project with immediate funding for planning and design. The Council's action states that Seven Locks will remain open as an elementary school at its present location.

The Council also approved a one-year acceleration of the Bells Mill Elementary School modernization and addition. Construction of Bells Mill will be completed in 2009 to relieve overcrowding. This overcrowding was exacerbated by the closing of three portables due to mold. Along with Seven Locks, both projects will serve to relieve overcrowding at Potomac Elementary School and the Churchill Cluster as a whole.

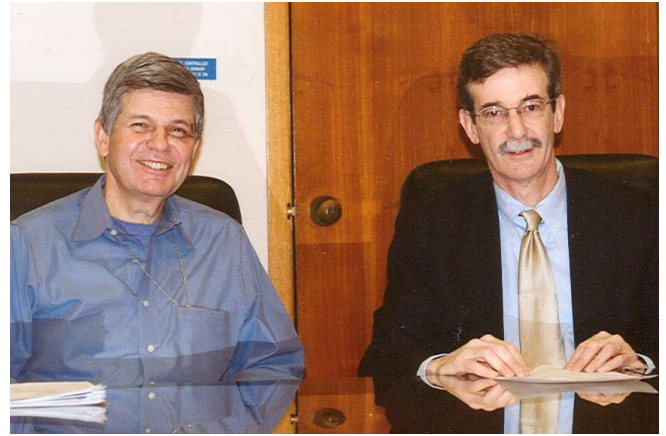
Potomac Elementary School will receive \$1 million in immediate aid to address maintenance needs and replace older portables. Bathroom repairs will be accelerated by one year and a feasibility study will be undertaken to identify additional improvements. Additionally, the Council confirmed the funding and schedule for an addition to Wayside Elementary School and modernization of Beverly Farms Elementary School.



Councilmember Denis with Theodore Cardinal McCarrick in Rockville. The Archdiocese of Washington is a key partner in providing services to needy residents.

## Renew Montgomery Update

The neighborhoods of Glenwood/Glenbrook Knolls and the Wohlshire section of the Brookdale neighborhood have been added to the Renew Montgomery Program. Renew Montgomery targets older communities for comprehensive improvements such as: roadway repairs and resurfacing, tree maintenance, storm drain improvements, street lighting and beautification. The County will meet with the selected neighborhoods to determine the overall scope of work to be performed. More information about Renew Montgomery can be found online at: [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/dirtmpl.asp?url=/Content/DPWT/Dir/renew\\_mont.asp](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/dirtmpl.asp?url=/Content/DPWT/Dir/renew_mont.asp)



Councilmember Denis and State Senator Brian Frosh meet with local officials from St. Petersburg, Russia in December 2005.

## Legislation Update

The following are critical pieces of legislation I sponsored.

Zoning Text Amendment 03-27 – Addresses height of tear-down homes by closing loopholes and lowering residential height limits.

Bill 6-04 – Establishes a tax credit for businesses that purchase computer equipment for telecommuting employees.

Zoning Text Amendment 05-01 – Allows non-resident professional offices to inhabit a historical building, like the Sycamore Store in Glen Echo, under a special exception.

Zoning Text Amendment 05-14 – Repeals the unconstitutional limited duration sign law.

Bill 21-05E – Increases protections for elderly and disabled when rental apartments are converted to condominiums.

Bill 26-05 – Addresses problems with stormwater runoff from single-lot developments.

Bill 27-05E – Sets higher penalties for violating the County's Forest Conservation Law.

Bill 31-05E – Creates lower-cost prescription drug program for County employees that could save taxpayers millions.

Bill 35-05 – Addresses recent problems in Site Plan enforcement discovered in Clarksburg.

Zoning Text Amendment 05-22 – Creates a unified process of review of some properties that straddle the border of a Central Business District (CBD). In the case of Lot 31 in Bethesda, this measure will help protect the adjacent Saks neighborhood by shifting development into the CBD and away from nearby homes.

Bill 4-06E – Repeals problematic lending discrimination law.

Resolution 15-1396 – Establishes free parking at libraries in Rockville, Silver Spring and Bethesda.

# What the Budget does for District 1

## Education

- Funds a solution to Churchill Cluster Elementary school overcrowding.
- Completes the roll-out of all-day kindergarten (one year ahead of the state mandate).
- Increases funding for elementary school class reductions and funding to reduce large high school classes.
- Funds additions to Ashburton ES, B-CC HS, Farmland ES, Garrett Park ES, Luxmanor ES, Pyle Middle School, Travilah ES, Westland MS, and Wayside ES.
- Funds restroom renovations at Wayside ES, Luxmanor ES, Tilden MS, and Bradley Hills ES.
- Funds modernization of Carderock ES, Cabin John MS, Farmland ES, Garrett Park ES, and Beverly Farms ES.

## Recreation & Parks

- Expands after-school programs to all County middle schools and some high schools.
- Funds completion of Concord Local Park improvements.
- Funds improvements to Elmhirst Local Park.
- Funds the new 25 acre Greenbriar local park in Potomac.
- Increased funding for general trail maintenance, and to address deterioration along the Georgetown Branch trail.
- Funds the Montrose Trail in North Bethesda.
- Allocates funding for a new North Bethesda Recreation Center.



Councilmember Denis with James Henson at the ceremony marking the County's purchase of the North Bethesda property where Henson's ancestor, Josiah Henson, was once a slave and the subject of Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel "Uncle Tom's Cabin".

## Transportation

- Provides \$160 million for the State Transportation Participation program to forward-fund needed State transportation projects including a study for a new southern entrance to the Bethesda Metro Station.
- Funds a study of stormdrainage and road needs in Glen Echo Heights.
- Funds for Bethesda parking garage facilities improvements, elevator improvements, and improved signs.
- Funds Bethesda bikeway and pedestrian improvements.
- Funds downtown Bethesda streetscaping.
- Funds Friendship Heights pedestrian & transit enhancements.
- Funds Greentree Road sidewalks.
- Funds MacArthur Boulevard bikeway improvements.
- Funds Bethesda North Conference Center intersection improvements.
- Funds Nebel Street extended in North Bethesda.
- Funds completion of Montrose Parkway.
- Increases funding to improve safety, amenities, and access at most bus stops in the county during the next six years.
- Funds 10 new noise walls to be built along County roads during the next four years.
- Provides a 38% increase in funding for resurfacing of major roads.
- Funds state-of-the-art tracking system for all Ride On buses, which will lead to better on-time service.
- Boosts funding for tree pruning, tree planting and maintenance, and removing foliage around traffic signs.
- Increases funding for the "Fare Share" and "Super Fare Share" subsidies to match employers' subsidies to employees who use mass transit to commute.
- Continues funding for "Free Wheeling Days" to encourage bus ridership along heavily congested routes.
- Funds free bus ridership for seniors for rides between morning and evening rush hours.
- Increases Ride On service on 24 routes at a cost of \$2 million and purchased 44 new buses.

## Public Safety

- Provides a 16% increase in the Fire & Rescue budget, including 92 new positions.
- Increases Police budget by 12%, including funds for 56 new officer and non-sworn positions.
- Funds renovations to the Glen Echo Fire Station.
- Funds renovations to the Rockville and Bethesda police stations.

## Libraries

- Funds for Potomac Library renovations.
- Increases funding for the acquisition of materials.
- Increases funding for maintenance needs.
- Funds the purchase more self-checkout machines.
- Provides free parking at all County libraries.





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## Quick County Resources

Abandoned Vehicles	301-840-2454	Health Code Violations	240-777-3986
Animal Complaints	240-773-5925	Housing/Code Enforcement	240-777-3600
Animal Services	240-773-5960	Illegal Dumping	240-777-7623
Board of Education	301-279-3617	Land Records	240-777-9477
Building Permits & Inspections	240-777-6210	Library Telephone Reference	240-777-0001
<a href="http://permittingservices.montgomerycountymd.gov/">http://permittingservices.montgomerycountymd.gov/</a>		Montgomery College General	301-279-5000
Bus Schedules	240-777-RIDE	MCPS	301-279-3391
Cable Complaints	240-777-3636	Noise Control	240-777-7770
Circuit Court	240-777-9466	Parking Violations	240-777-8740
County Facilities Reservations	240-777-2706	Parks	301-495-4605
Consumer Affairs	240-777-3636	Property Tax Assessments	301-279-1431
County Council	240-777-7900	Property Tax Billing	240-777-8950
County Executive	240-777-2500	Snow Removal & Potholes	240-777-7623
County General Information	240-777-1000	Street Lights	240-777-2190
Crisis Hotline (24 hours)	240-777-4000	Trash Collection	240-777-6410
Emergency (Police, Fire & Rescue) Dial 911		Water Main Break	301-206-4002
Non-Emergency	301-279-8000	Zoning Complaints	240-777-6259
Environment Protection	240-777-7770	Zoning Information	240-777-6240